

CHARLIE BAKER
Governor



KARYN POLITO
Lt. Governor

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Baker-Polito Administration, WGBH and Special Guests to Celebrate the Massachusetts High School Class of 2020 with a Virtual Commencement Ceremony

BOSTON – In partnership with WGBH, Governor Charlie Baker will deliver a commencement address to the Class of 2020 as part of a celebration for graduating seniors from 668 public and private schools across the Commonwealth, to be aired in a special broadcast at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9.

Massachusetts Commencement 2020 will feature congratulatory remarks from Jason and Devin McCourty of the New England Patriots, members of the Red Sox and the Boston Celtics, and a number of celebrities with Massachusetts ties, including singer Rachel Platten, actor Steve Carell and more. In a special premiere performance, members of the legendary Boston Pops Orchestra, with Keith Lockhart conducting, will provide the traditional graduation march 'Pomp and Circumstance' for the ceremony. Students from around the Commonwealth will give valedictorian-type speeches to their classmates.

WGBH will broadcast the program, Massachusetts Commencement 2020, across the Commonwealth, on WGBH 2 in Greater Boston, and on its partner station WGBY/New England Public Media in western Massachusetts. Both stations will stream the program on their website and social media platforms. WGBH also will make the program available to other television stations in Massachusetts, including community access channels.

"Graduation ceremonies are important milestones in a young person's life that deserve to be celebrated," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "While we cannot gather in the traditional way, we want to recognize, celebrate and salute Massachusetts' Class of 2020 for their

accomplishments and their resiliency during these difficult times. We are very thankful to WGBH for working with us to help do that.”

“Although graduation looks different this year for students throughout Massachusetts, this momentous occasion should still be celebrated however possible, and we are glad to offer a special ceremony for the Class of 2020,” **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito.**

“It’s an honor for WGBH to create this special television event with Governor Baker to recognize the Massachusetts Class of 2020,” **said WGBH President and CEO Jon Abbott.** “While this can’t replace a ceremony with their classmates, it will allow everyone across the Commonwealth to join in a celebration of all our Massachusetts graduates.”

“Commencement is such a meaningful event in a high school student’s life, and we all feel the loss of the traditional way to celebrate this year. This program gives us, as a Commonwealth, the opportunity to mark the achievements of the Class of 2020 and celebrate students as they move on to their next phase in life,” **said Education Secretary James Peyser.**

“Many of us have been thinking about this year’s graduating seniors and how many important events they will miss,” **said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley.** “The class of 2020 has a unique history, they hold a special place in our hearts, and this event will give us all a chance to congratulate them.”

The student remarks for the program were prepared in collaboration with 826 Boston, a nonprofit youth writing and publishing organization.

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